

## Letter from Mabel Hubbard Bell to Eliza Symonds Bell, December 27, 1879, with transcript

Letter from Mrs. Alexander Graham Bell to Mrs. Alexander Melville Bell. 904 14th., St., December 27th., 1879. My dear Mrs. Bell:

I sent you some Xmas cards yesterday on the principal "Better late than never" and they had been waiting some time to be sent. Thank you very much for your pretty cards which arrived Xmas eve just after Elsie's little Xmas tree party. Elsie did have such a nice time, we hardly thought she would care for it but she was as pleased and excited as possible, running from one to the other of us and calling us to look and see the pretty bright candles. We had four little children to play with her, and a real grand time they had, they were all pretty well behaved little things, one little girl only appropriating the present of another she fancied. I had little presents on the tree for Elsie to give away to everybody beside the candy. Next year I think I will have her hang her stockings and get her presents from Santa Claus, and then give little things to her friends from her tree. I can't help liking Santa Claus and the stockings better than the tree as it is what, I have been accustomed to but the Christmas tree is such a pretty idea I will let Elsie have that too. Christmas day we dined with Mamma and drank your healths among others. We feel so much richer all of us this year that we have indulged in handsome presents. Alec gave me a lovely plaque, representing two swallows in the air homeward flying just reaching the furthest at spreading branch of the old familiar apple tree. It was mounted on velvet set in a frame and hanges over my mantlepiece in the parlor. Mamma gave me a handsome old engraving, my Sisters vases. Papa's present to Mamma was the most exquisite set of pearls I ever saw, solitaire pearl earrings and large pearls set in the form of a crescent for a broach. Maurice gave Sister, solitaire pearl earrings and a diamond engagement ring so now she has two. Maurice and Grace are here spending the holidays both leaders in the most uproarious fun and merriment and both apparently of the same age. I don't wonder at

## Library of Congress

the suddenness of 2 of my Sister's engagement any longer, he has entered the family and become entirely one of us in an equally short space of time. He calls My parents "Mamma and Papa" all the time already! And yet above all the fun and boyishness one sees the kind gentle german heart, and the clear brilliant head of a very remarkable man.

It is pretty cold here now. — December 28th. Christmas das was warm and rainy changing suddenly to coldness and we had one or two days when the streets were covered with ice which however melted in the sun, but today (Sunday) it is warmer again now. Charlie arrived this morning after we had concluded he was served in the same way as we and could not arrive until tomorrow. Alec is delighted to have one of his own family with him, and expects to enjoy his visit immensely. I want to hear all about your Christmas dinner but have not had a chance of talking to him as all my family dined with us today and we took tea with them and now Charlie, Maurice, and Alec have escorted the children to a colored church. Tomorrow I am going to make a round of calls and hope the result may be a few Near Year's callers but my hopes are not very high. Mamma does not expect many either. Maurice thinks I ought to be satisfied with a call from him! He says he has played King James to Mrs. Sander's Elizabeth and now wants to go and see if she recognised him. Please say nothing of this however. Maurice is a Lawyer now and does not want to be hindered in his new profession by the prejudice against Actors.

I have no more paper and so must say Goodnight. With much love to all and a Happy New Year,

Affectionately, Mabel.